EIGHTBALL
Clowes

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NUMBER 17
BY D. G. CLOWES
FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS
for
MATURE READERS
SINCE 1989
EIGHTBALL
The Psyche pathology of Nostalgia
Clowes

EIGHTBALL

MAINTAINING AN ICY DISTANCE BETWEEN ARTIST AND READER SINCE 1989

I'M SURE I WOULDN'T KNOW!

SO DANIEL,
CAN I WRITE A LOVE LETTER TO ENID? GOD, SHE IS THE TOTAL SHIT. IF YOU WRITE HER NAME BACKWARDS IT SPELLS DINE, BUT I GUESS YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT... IF I'VE GOT A HUGE CRUSH ON HER DOES THAT MEAN IT'S YOU THAT I TRULY HAVE FEELINGS FOR?

DELIA GONZALEZ
NEW YORK, NY

DEAR MR. CLOWES,
I'M AN ART SCHOOL STUDENT INTERESTED IN COMICS WHOSE ALL-MALE COMIC BOOK CLASS PROPOSED THAT I POSE AS 'THE DAZZLER' IN A SPANDEX JUMPSUIT FOR THEM.

CHRISTY McCAFFREY
PROVIDENCE, RI

DANNY,
COME ON, FOUR BUCKS? I CAN STILL GET A FULL MEAL IN THIS TOWN FOR THAT KIND OF DOUGH. (MAY I RECOMMEND MAN-JO-VIN'S ON DAMEN -- ED.) I CAN STILL CATCH A MATINEE FOR THAT, DANNY.

EDDIE CONNOLLY
CHICAGO, IL.

DEAR EIGHTBALL STAFF,
IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE READERS AND CREATORS OF YOUR MAGAZINE CONSIST LARGELY OF SOCIETY'S PSEUDO-VICTIMS. PEOPLE WHO THINK THE WORLD HAS GIVEN THEM A SHIT LIFE PURELY BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO DEVELOP THE SOCIAL SKILLS TO INTERACT WITH THOSE AROUND THEM. WELL READERS, TRUE SUCCESS IS MEASURED IN TERMS OF INTERACTIVE RELATIONSHIPS, NOT PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS. I HOPE THAT YOUR READERS CAN BE HONEST ENOUGH TO REALIZE THAT THEIR 'PEOPLE HATING' ATTITUDE IS UNWORTHY OF CREATIVE MINDS. I WISH YOU PROGRESSION.

ALEX WALLIS
ENGLAND

DEAR MR. CLOWES,
THANK YOU SO MUCH! I FEEL LIKE A CELEBRITY! UNFORTUNATELY, I DON'T KNOW ANYONE ELSE WHO READS EIGHTBALL... I HATE MELORRA BUT I LOVE JOSH, ESPECIALLY WHEN HE WAS LOOKING AT THOSE BUTT-PLUGGERS IN NUMBER FOURTEEN.

NATALIE LARIOS
HIGHLAND MILLS, NY

OPPOSITES ATTRACT

"Not quite, Mr. Pessimist. I'm saying that Hitler's nutsack was half-full."

INSECT

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EIGHTBALL
2140 SHATTUCK
SUITE 2107
BERKELEY
CALIFORNIA
94704

ORIGINAL ART?

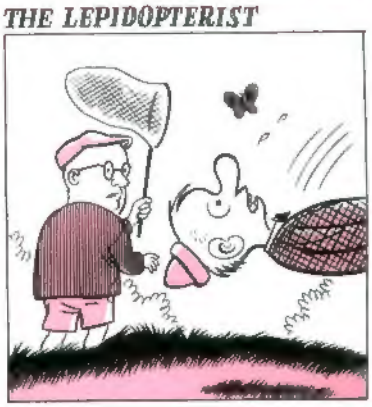
YOU WANT? WE GOT! EIGHTBALL, LLOYD LLEWELLYN, ETC. SEND $3 (CASH ONLY) FOR OUR CURRENT PRICE LIST!

SEND TO: EIGHTBALL 2140 SHATTUCK #2107 BERKELEY CA. 94704

POWERMASTER

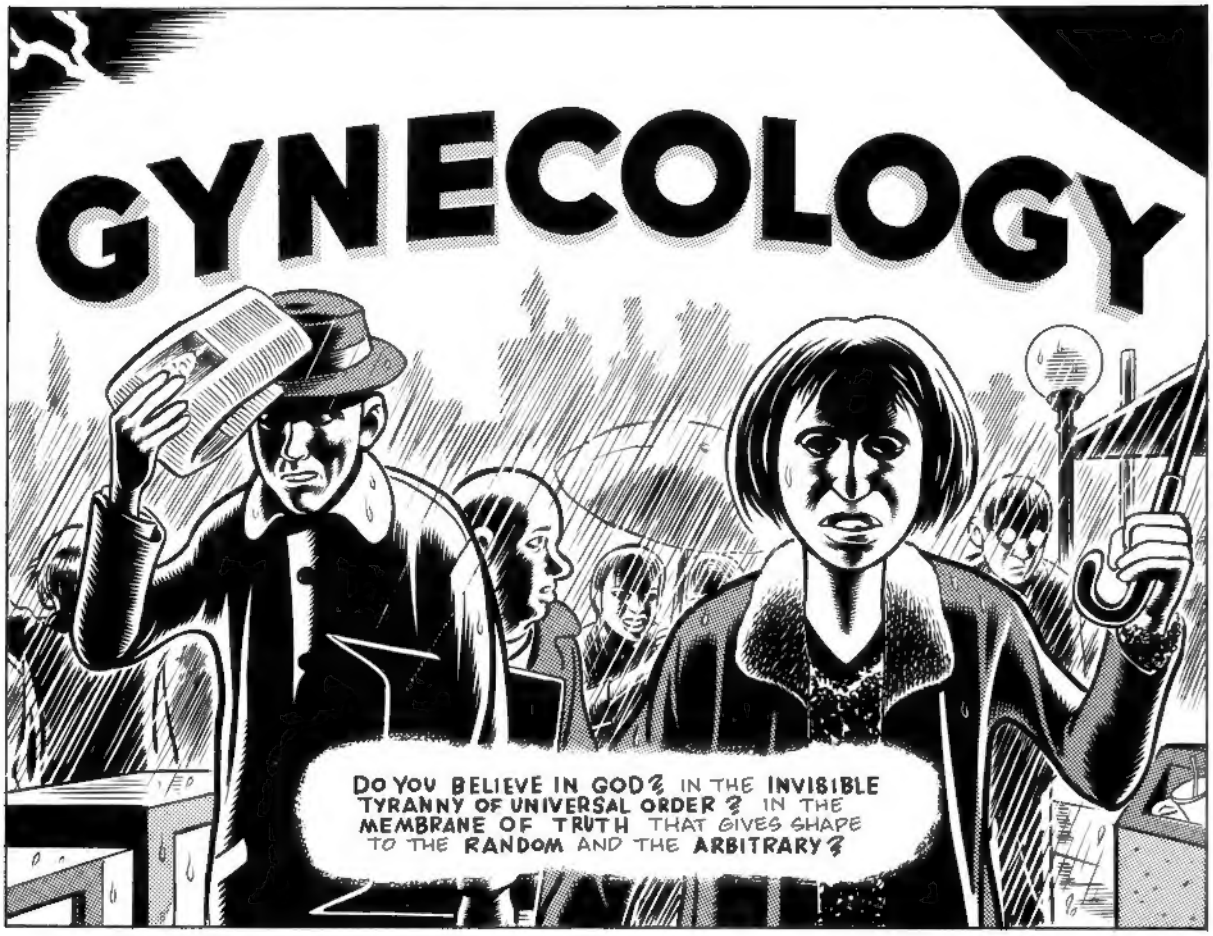
"You'll get no help from me -- you caused your own problems, young man."

THE LEPIDOPTERIST



"Excuse me. Someone is using a bad pun in the next panel."

GYNECOLOGY



THE MOVING EYE, FLUTTERING RANDOMLY, ALIGHTS ON THIS ARBITRARY MAN. IMMEDIATELY WE NOTICE HIS MANNERED, IMPRECISE STYLE; THE SUIT THAT, THROUGH NO FAULT OF ITS OWN, FAILS TO EVOKE A RUMPLED WILLIAM BENDIX...

ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL RECORDS HIS NAME (AS OF 4/8/88) IS **EPPS**, HAVING EXCISED HIS FIRST NAME ON THAT DATE.

MOREOVER, IS THIS TENSENESS JUSTIFIED? WHAT SORT OF MAN IS OUR EPPS?

YOU WILL NOTICE A SUDDEN LURCH... IS IT BECAUSE OF THE THUNDER? THE WOMAN'S HAT? THE ARCHITECTURE?

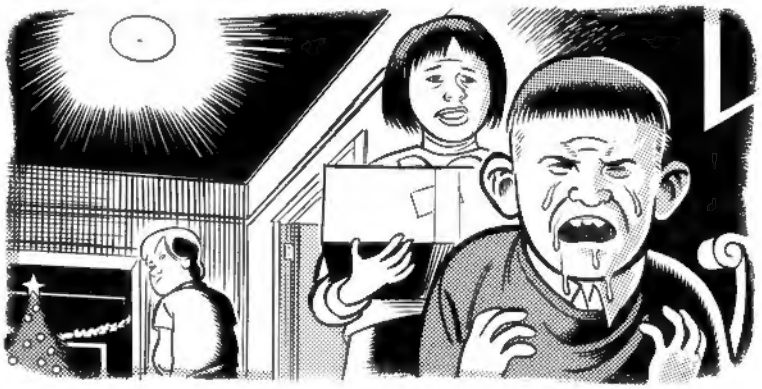
AT THIS EXACT MOMENT ELEVEN YEARS AGO HE IS ON THE MAKE, FEIGNING ASEXUALITY TO WIN THE FAVOR OF TWO BEAUTIFUL, SEXUALLY AMBIGUOUS WOMEN...

B.

THIS PERSONA HAS BEEN DEVELOPED BY EPPS AS A MEANS TO GAIN ENTRANCE INTO THE LIVES OF COLD, ASSERTIVE WOMEN (HIS PREFERRED TYPE).

IT WORKS, BUT ONLY TO A POINT. HE CAN NEVER TAKE THE NEXT STEP WITHOUT FATALLY BETRAYING HIS ADOPTED CHARACTER. AFTER NINE MONTHS OF TRIAL AND ERROR HE WILL GIVE UP AND TRY SOMETHING NEW.

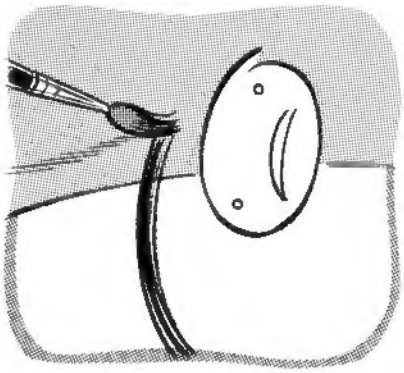
OUR EPPS APPEARS TO BE A QUIET CHILD, BORN OF MODEST MEANS... HERE'S SOMETHING: HE HAS A MENTALLY DEFICIENT OLDER BROTHER WHO GETS ALL THE ATTENTION...



HE IS SOMETHING OF A COLLECTOR AND HAS ON PRIDEFUL DISPLAY A COMPLETE SET OF "DR. DISGUISE" FIGURES. HE CHANGES THE COSTUMES WEEKLY... HE ALSO HAS A MILD FASCINATION WITH NAZI GERMANY...

IN LATE ADOLESCENCE, A SWEDISH STEPFATHER ENTERS THE PICTURE, DISDAINFUL OF YOUNG EPPS (KNOWN THEN AS RAYMOND).

THIS HATEFUL MAN WILL ONE DAY PAY FOR EPPS TO GO TO ART SCHOOL AND LATER SERVE AS AN ALL-PURPOSE SCAPEGOAT.

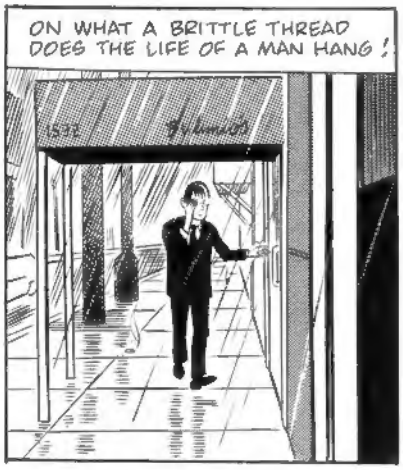


SEVERAL YEARS AFTER ART SCHOOL; AFTER ASEXUALITY, AFTER MORBID VULGARITY, AFTER THE JOE LUNCH-PAIL COMMON MAN PHASE, EPPS DEVELOPS A NEW PERSONALITY.

HE READS CHESTER HIMES AND MALCOLM X AND LISTENS ATTENTIVELY TO MILES, MONK, ETC. HE TEMPORARILY WINS THE HEART OF A WOMAN NAMED BONITA (BUNNY) WHO ONCE SANG A MEDLEY FROM "THE WIZ" AT A HIGH SCHOOL ASSEMBLY...

SHE JOKINGLY CHIDES HIM (IN THE VOICE OF HER GRANDMOTHER) FOR ACTING NIGGERISH. HE USES HEROIN BUT NEVER MANAGES TO GET ADDICTED.

AFTER SIX WEEKS SHE LEAVES HIM AND BEGINS SYSTEMATICALLY DATING HIS FRIENDS.

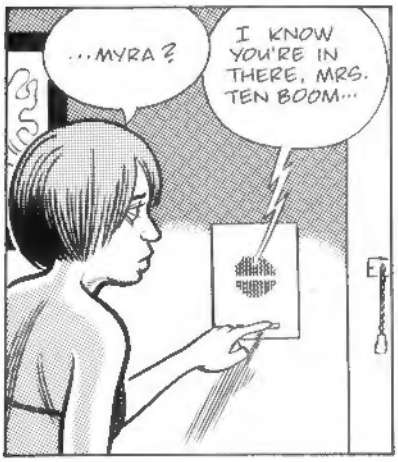


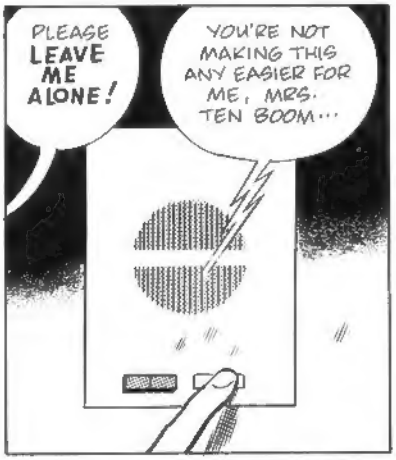
CLICK!

EVERY DECEMBER, BACHELOR EPPS GOES CHRISTMAS SHOPPING. "IT'S FOR MY WIFE," HE SAYS, "SHE'S A BIG GIRL, AS TALL AS I AM..."

IS OUR HERO SIMPLY A BASHFUL TRANSVESTITE, TAKING THIS ANNUAL OPPORTUNITY TO BUY WITHOUT SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS?

AFTER SELECTING A NEW ENSEMBLE, HE MOVES ON TO THE MEN'S SECTION...

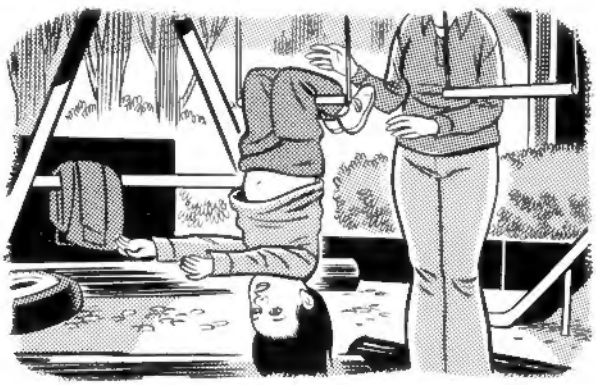




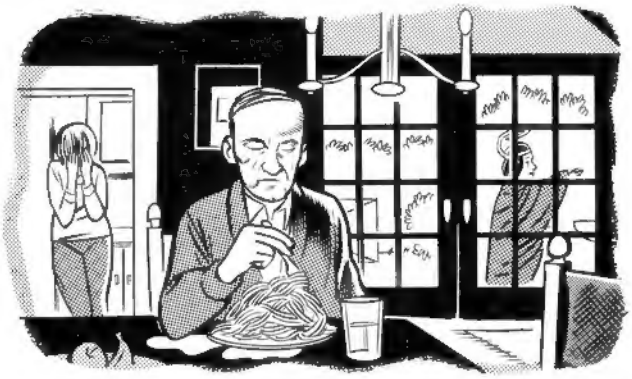
I **HAVE** TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR HUSBAND...

THIS IS **CLAUDETTE**. WE MET HER BRIEFLY IN THE RESTAURANT. SHE HAS THE KIND OF OBSESSION (IN THIS CASE, FOR DR. TEN BOOM) THAT IS SELDOM SEEN OUTSIDE OF MADE-FOR-TV MOVIES...

HER CHILDHOOD WAS NOT UNUSUAL. HER PROBLEMS (IF THEY ARE IN FACT PROBLEMS) ARE POSSIBLY NEUROLOGICAL IN ORIGIN...



FROM HER ADOLESCENT HOMELIFE, CLOUDED BY THE STRANGE DYNAMIC BETWEEN FATHER AND MOTHER, AN OVERDEVELOPED FANTASY LIFE BEGINS...

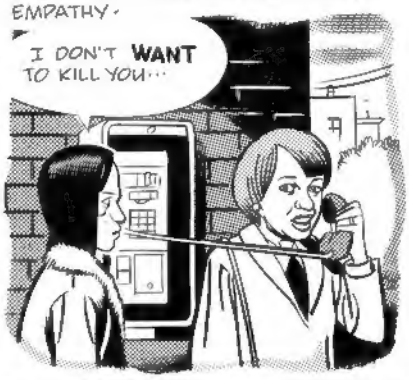


AT NINETEEN SHE HAD HAD NO SEXUAL EXPERIENCE, AND HAD NOT YET BEGUN MENSTRUATION, POSSIBLY THROUGH SHEER WILL POWER.

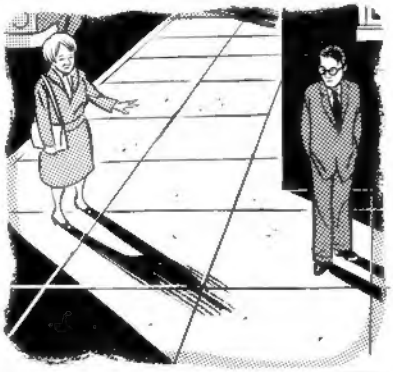
AGAINST THE INSISTENCE OF HER MOTHER, HER FATHER TAKES HER TO SEE A GYNECOLOGIST, DR. TEN BOOM. THIS REMAINS THE ONLY VIOLATION OF HER WOMANLY PLANES TO DATE.

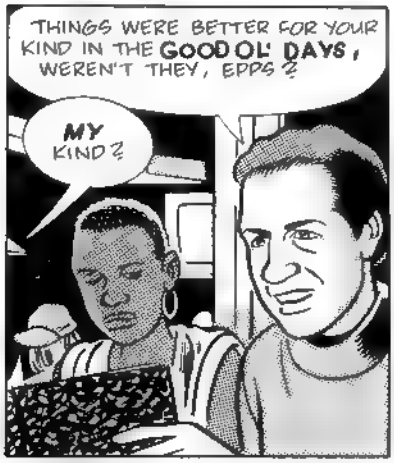
THE OBSESSION (SUCH AS IT IS) HAS BLOSSOMED FROM THAT MOMENT; QUIETLY, AT FIRST...

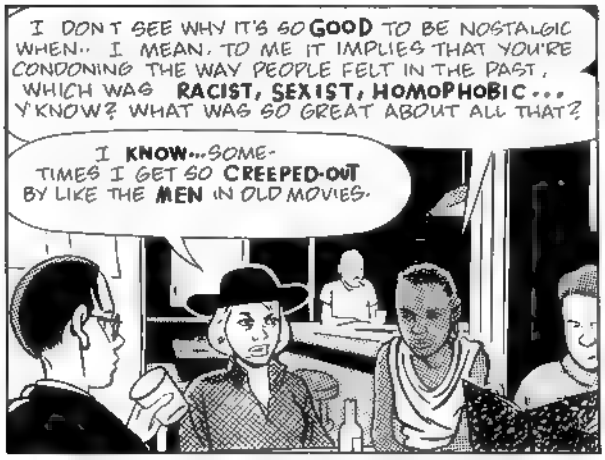
TURNING CONFRONTATIONAL ONLY IN THE LAST YEAR AND ONLY THEN IN REGARD TO MRS. TEN BOOM, FOR WHOM SHE HOLDS A FRUSTRATING, HOSTILE EMPATHY.

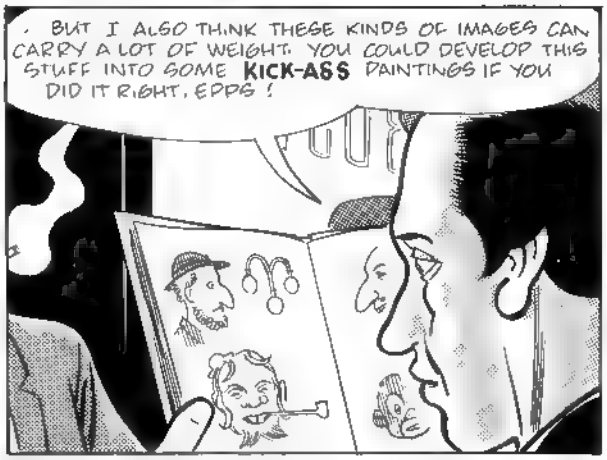


TO CLAUDETTE, OUR EPPS IS AN ALLY; AN ANGEL OF COMPASSIONATE TEN BOOM DIVISION... OR PERHAPS SOMETHING MORE?



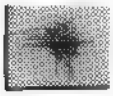






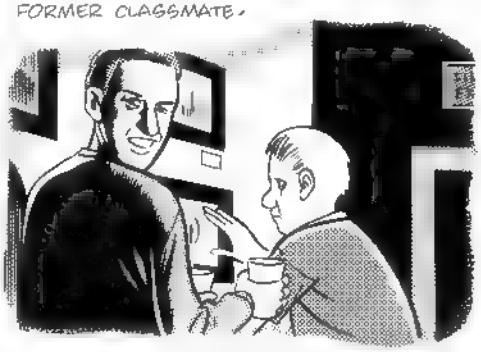
FROM THERE, BUNNY TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY TO RETELL THE ANECDOTE ABOUT HER FATHER AS A YOUNG MAN. EPPS RECOGNIZED IT THE FIRST TIME AS HAVING BEEN LIFTED ALMOST VERBATIM FROM A SPEECH BY GODFREY CAMBRIDGE IN 'THE PRESIDENT'S ANALYST' BUT DECIDES AS BEFORE TO KEEP THIS TO HIMSELF.

IN STRAINING TO CONCEAL HIS EMBARRASSMENT, A MAGIC FIRING OF SYNAPSES BRINGS TO MIND THE LAST TIME HIS PAINTINGS WERE HELD ON DISPLAY (DURING A ROTHKO PHASE, AT A POST GRADUATION EXHIBIT)..



FOR SOME REASON, A SEMI-FAMOUS CRITIC IS IN ATTENDANCE, AND YOUNG EDDS IS FLUSHED WITH UNREALISTIC HOPEFULNESS.

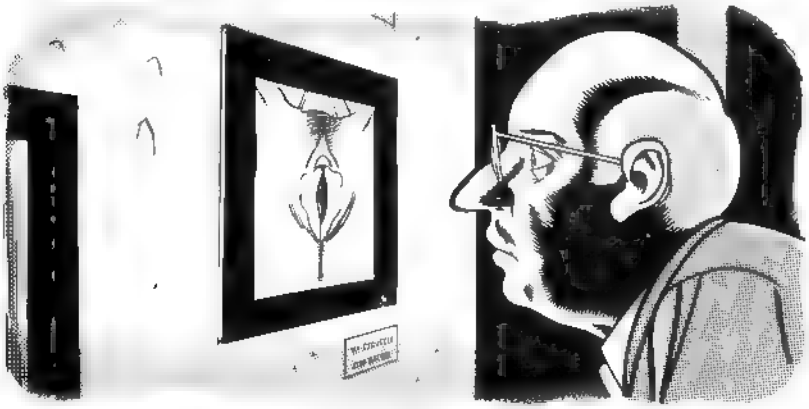
MIDWAY THROUGH THE EVENING, LIEBERMAN (WHO YOU KNOW) AND A **MR. PEACH** (KNOWN TO ALL AS AN UNREPENTANT MASTURBATOR) PASTE A PORNOGRAPHIC PICTURE OVER ONE OF THE SENSITIVE PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY A FORMER CLASSMATE.



THE SHOW IS NOT GOING WELL. THE CROWD THINS EARLY ON AND THOSE WHO REMAIN ARE DRUNK.

SOMEHOW, THE ART CRITIC IS STILL THERE, STARING INTENTLY AT PEACH AND LIEBERMAN'S PASTED ON IMAGE...

HE CONTINUES STARING, LOOKING BACK AND FORTH AT THE PICTURE AND ITS TITLE "MY STRUGGLE" BY JULIE BACON.

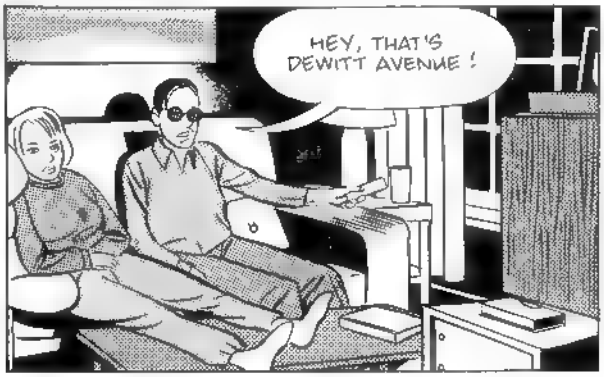


SABINE AND EDDS MET WHEN SHE RESPONDED TO AN AD THAT READ: "FEM. FIG. MODEL WANTED FOR FINE ARTIST/PAINTER ALL TYPES LV. MSG."

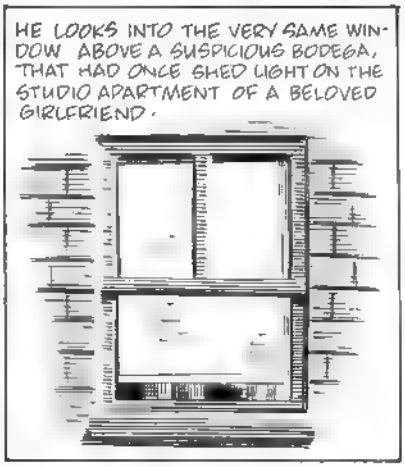
SHE HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT OF HERSELF AS A GLAMOROUS, UNUSUAL WOMAN AND THIS WAS JUST THE SORT OF CONFIRMATION SHE NEEDED - FROM AN **ARTIST** YET!

TO EPPS, THIS AD HAD BEEN NO MORE THAN A CHEAP PLOY TO MEET BRAZEN WOMEN ..

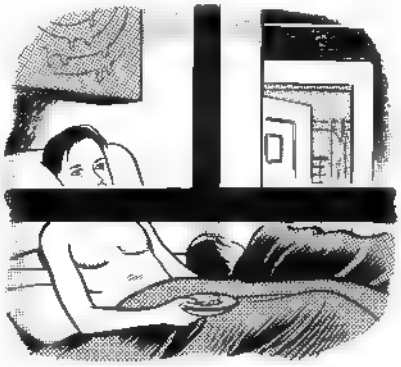
ON ANOTHER NIGHT, AS THEY WATCH A LOW-BUDGET ART FILM MADE BY A FRIEND OF A FRIEND EPPS NOTICES SOMETHING...



HE LOOKS INTO THE VERY SAME WINDOW ABOVE A SUSPICIOUS BODEGA, THAT HAD ONCE SHED LIGHT ON THE STUDIO APARTMENT OF A BELOVED GIRLFRIEND.

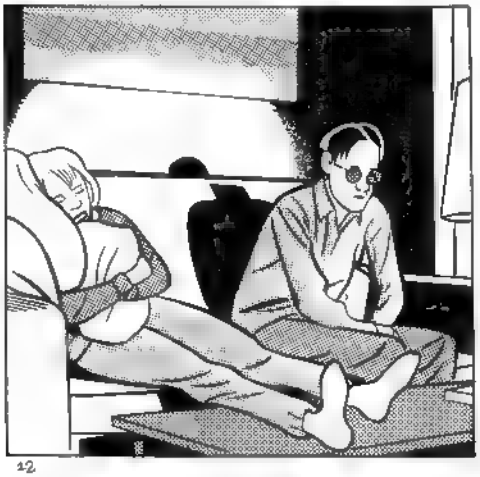


SHE FALLS ASLEEP AFTER THEIR FIRST AND ONLY SEXUAL CONGRESS AS EPPS SITS, BREATHLESS IN RAPTUROUS CONTEMPLATION..

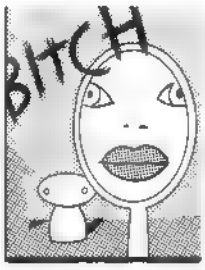


WITHIN AN HOUR OF WITHDRAWAL, HIS EYES BEGIN TO ITCH; HE STARTS COUGHING; HIS LUNGS CONTRACT... IS IT HER PILLOW (THE FEATHERS?) OR HER CAT?

HE WRITES A NOTE (THE ONE TIME HE WOULD WRITE 'LOVE' AND MEAN IT) AND LEAVES, NEVER IMAGINING THAT HE WOULD NOT BE INVITED BACK...



HE REMEMBERS A PAINTING DONE DURING THAT TIME.

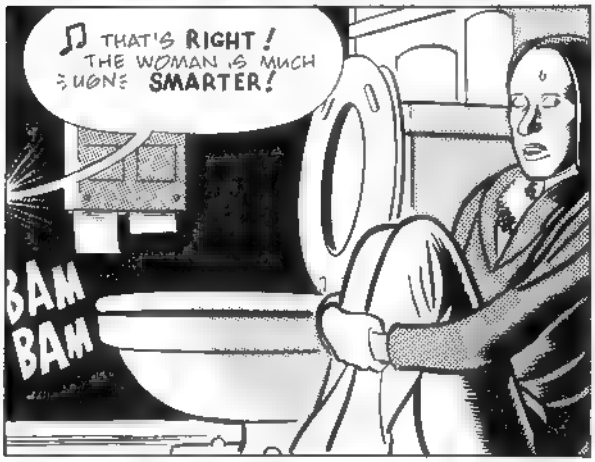


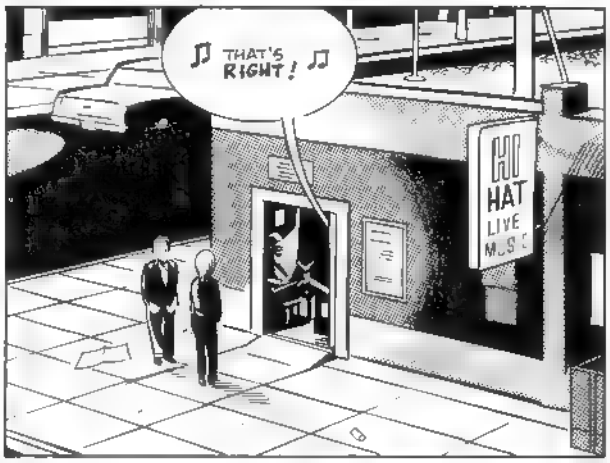
SLOWLY, A VISCOUS LOATHING COATS OVER HIS MEMORIES, SPARING NOTHING THE PAINTING, THE GIRLFRIEND... "IF I KNEW THEN WHAT I KNOW NOW," HE THINKS...

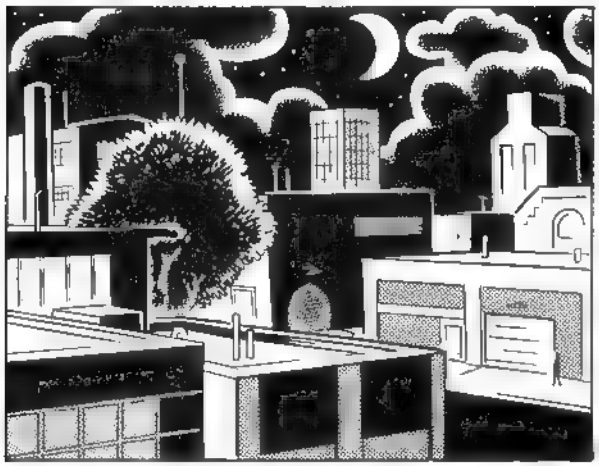
CHAPTER TWO

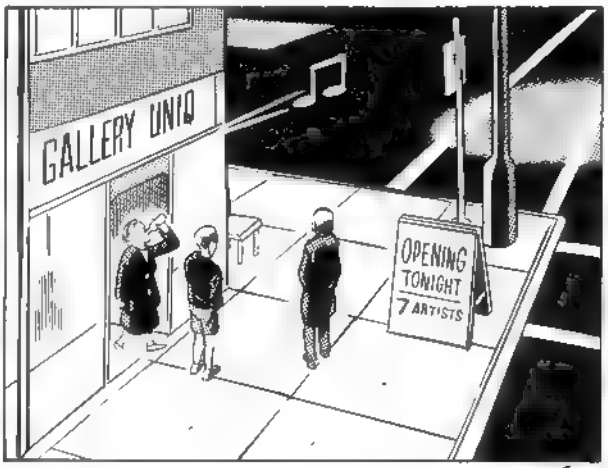
SEVERAL YEARS AGO, EPPS' MOTHER AND STEP-FATHER DIED (OF BACTERIAL MENINGITIS) LEAVING HIM A MODEST INHERITANCE. WHAT WILL HE DO WHEN THIS MONEY RUNS OUT? GET A JOB? MARRY A RICH WIDOW? BECOME A FAMOUS ARTIST?

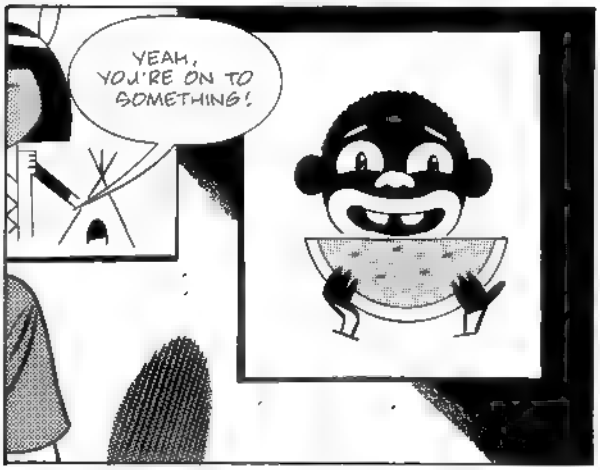
... AND WHAT OF DOCTOR TEN BOOM?

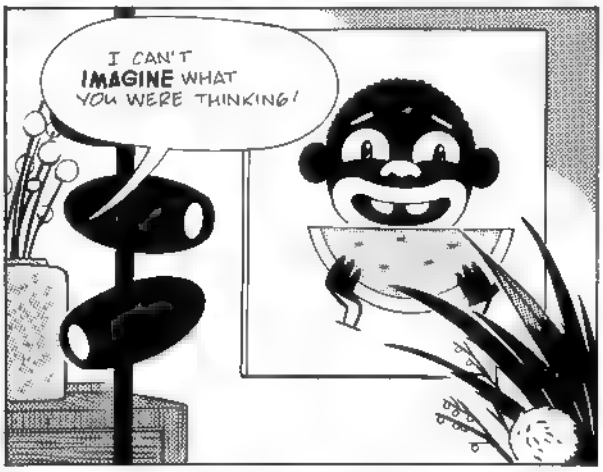




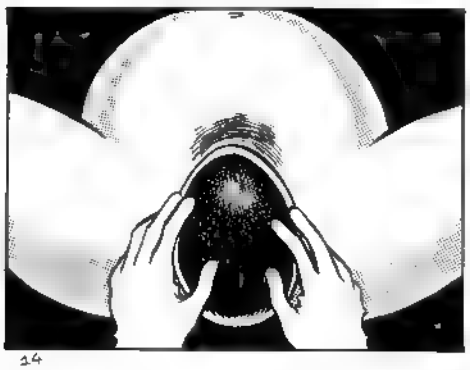






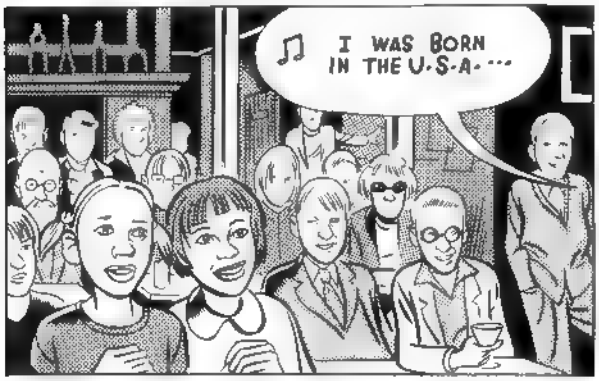


AT THAT VERY MOMENT, SOMEWHERE IN FINLAND, EPPS' TRUE LOVE (THE GIRL ABOVE THE BODEGA) IS GIVING BIRTH TO HER FIRST CHILD.

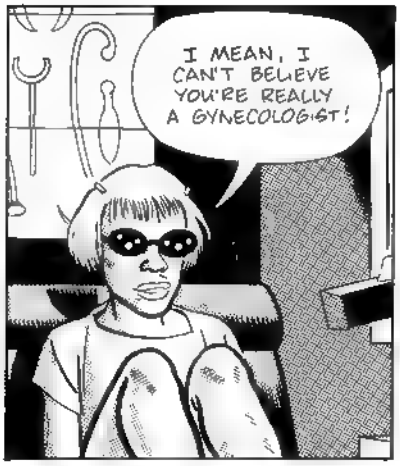


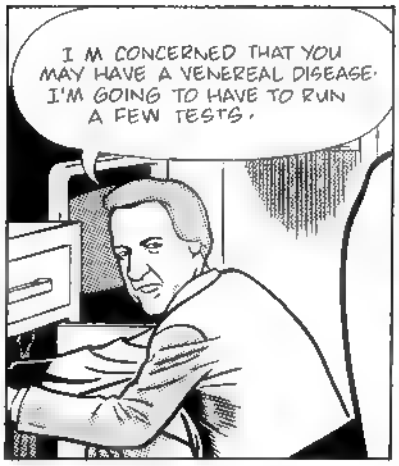
HER HUSBAND, AFTER WITNESSING THE DELIVERY, IS UNABLE TO HAVE SEX WITH HER FOR 18 MONTHS. DURING THIS TIME SHE WRITES IN HER HEAD LETTERS OF APOLOGY TO FORMER SEXUAL PARTNERS

IN BETTER TIMES, A SINGING GYNECOLOGIST MIGHT BE IGNORED BY THE PUBLIC, BUT FOR DOCTOR TEN BOOM THE CROWDS CONTINUE TO GROW.

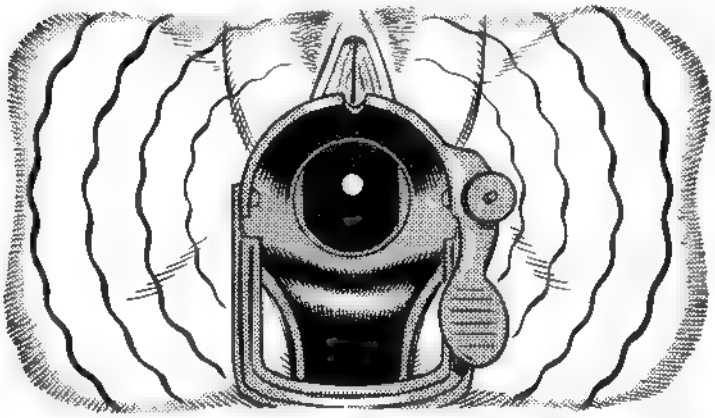


IN ATTENDANCE ONCE AGAIN (LAST WEEK PADDY DOYLES, THIS WEEK THE MARBLE ROOM) IS **KAREN GHOSTLAW**, A POPULAR SINGER.

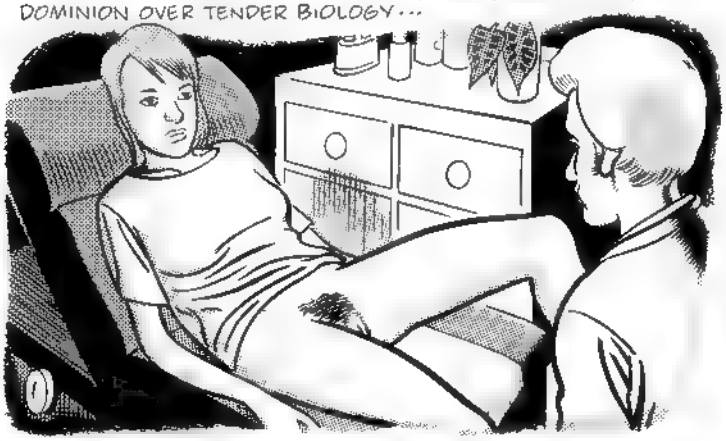




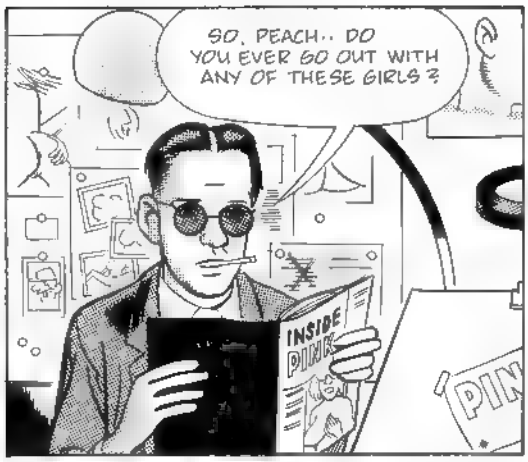
TWENTY-ONE YEARS AGO, ON A FRIDAY IN NOVEMBER, DR. TEN BOOM PERFORMED HIS FIRST EXAMINATION..

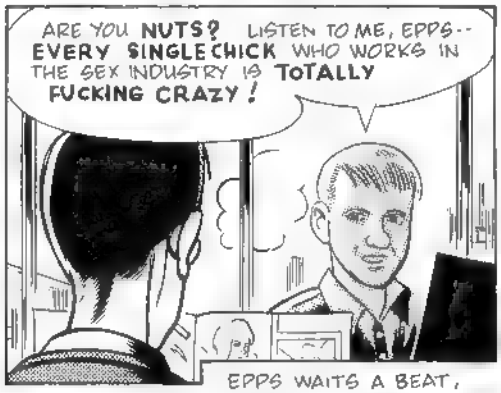


HE RECALLS THE FLUSH OF EUPHORIA, THE SWELL OF PROUD DOMINION OVER TENDER BIOLOGY...

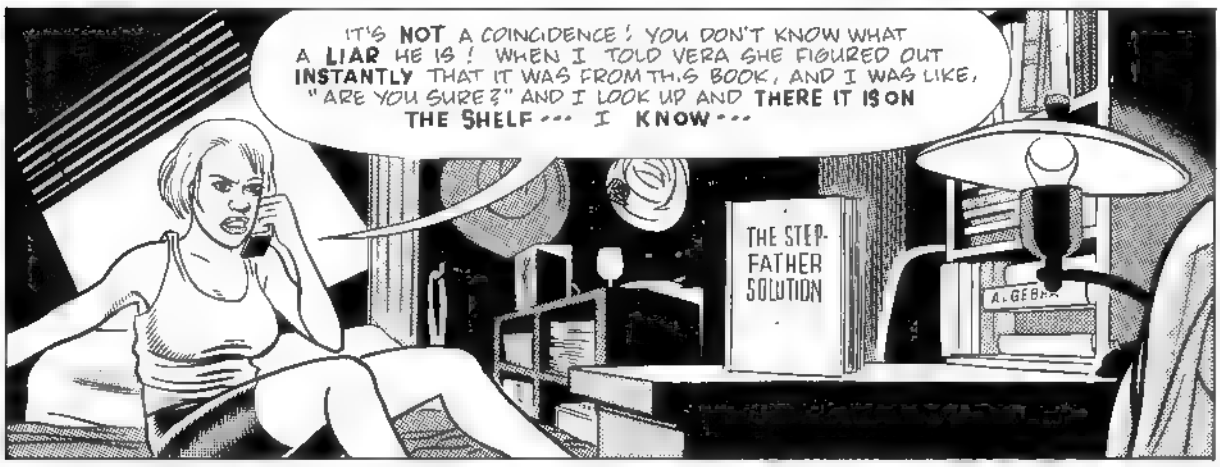


HE REMEMBERS A DISASTROUS ATTEMPT AT BEDSIDE HUMOR..





EPPS WAITS A BEAT, EXPECTING THE OBVIOUS FOLLOW-UP ("OF COURSE I DO") BUT A PHONE RINGS AND THE ACT IS LEFT UNCONSUMATED

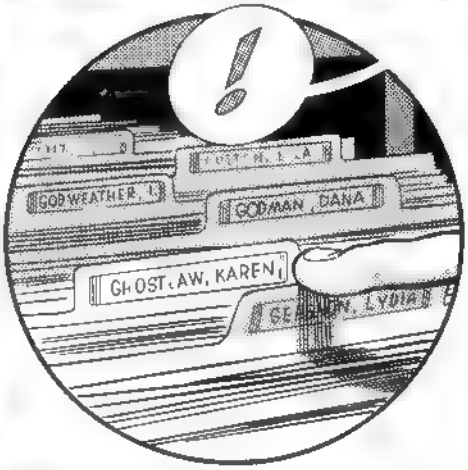


SABINE HAD ALWAYS PICTURED HERSELF, A GLAMOROUS, UNUSUAL WOMAN, SETTLING ONE DAY INTO A CONVENTIONAL UPPER MIDDLE-CLASS EXISTENCE (WITH HUSBAND, VOLVO, ETC.) BUT CIRCUMSTANCE HAS PLAYED A CRUEL JOKE, LEAVING HER WITH AN UNWIELDY ARRAY OF CONFLICTING TENDENCIES (FROM SHOWY, GUSHING EMPATHY TO INDIGNANT MARTYRDOM), (USUALLY IN THAT ORDER).

I CAN'T BELIEVE WE DID IT IN HIS STIRRUPS! ...POOR DUTCH! HE'D BE SO APPALLED!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
JUST SNOOPING... I'VE NEVER BEEN IN A GYNECOLOGIST'S OFFICE BEFORE!

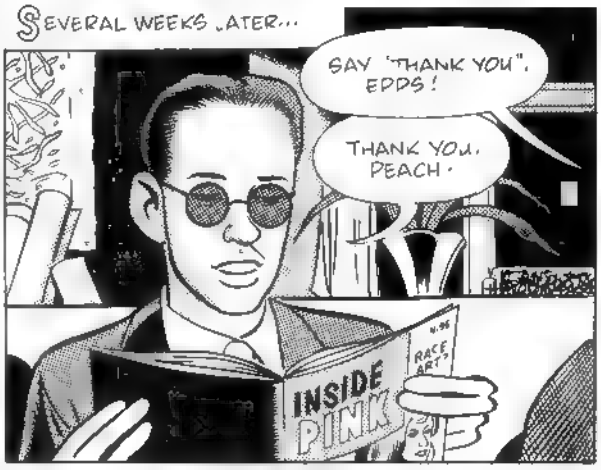
DON'T GO IN THERE... HE'S VERY FUSSY!
I'M JUST LOOKING.

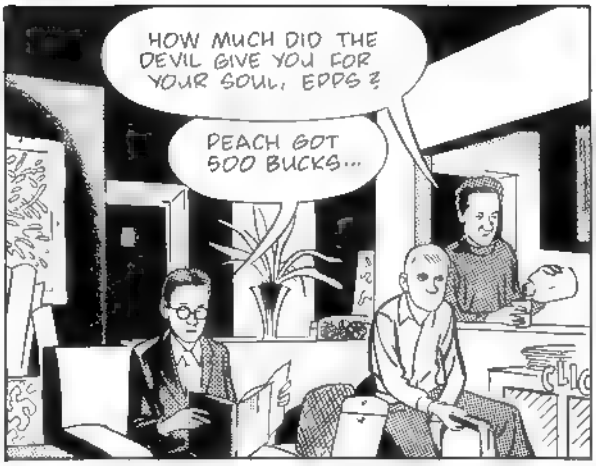

!
GODWEATHER, T.
GODMAN, DANA
GHOST, AW, KAREN

DO YOU MIND SIGNING A BODY PART?
OH, I SUPPOSE NOT I AM A DOCTOR.

I WONDER IF I COULD MAKE A SPECIAL REQUEST... THERE'S A SONG I WANT YOU TO SING FOR ME...

I DON'T THINK SO.. WHAT I SING IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME... AND ANYWAY, I'M A HAPPILY MARRIED MAN!
SQUEEK SQUEEK


SEVERAL WEEKS LATER...
SAY "THANK YOU", EDDS!
THANK YOU, PEACH.
INSIDE PINK
RACE ART


HOW MUCH DID THE DEVIL GIVE YOU FOR YOUR SOUL, EPPS?
PEACH GOT 500 BUCKS...

BY THE WAY, PEACH.. I SAW SOMETHING YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN..
OH YEAH?
ART BRUT

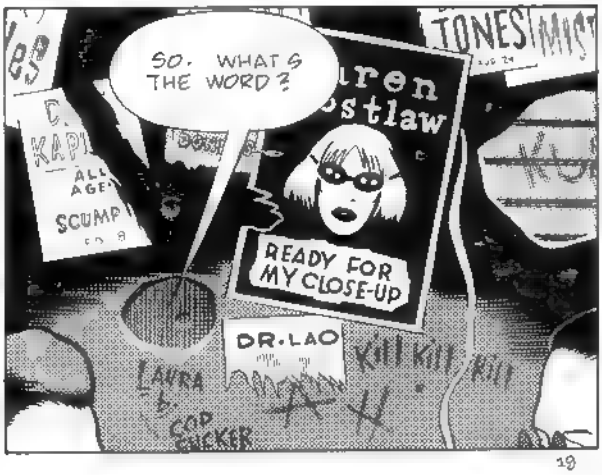
I KNOW SOMEBODY WHO HAS PHOTOS OF KAREN GHOSTLAW'S PUSSY!

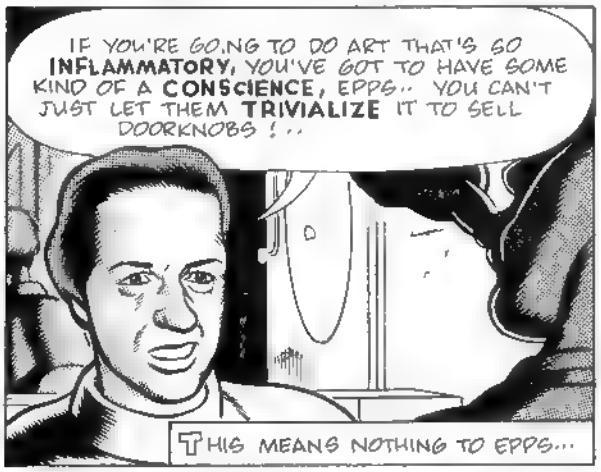
SO, HOW ARE THINGS BETWEEN YOU AND EPPS? BETTER?
I THINK SO... IT'S SO HARD TO TELL WITH HIM, BUT YEAH.

WE'VE STILL GOT SOME THINGS TO WORK ON, BUT YEAH, IT'S DEFINITELY BETTER...
ARE YOU SABRINA?

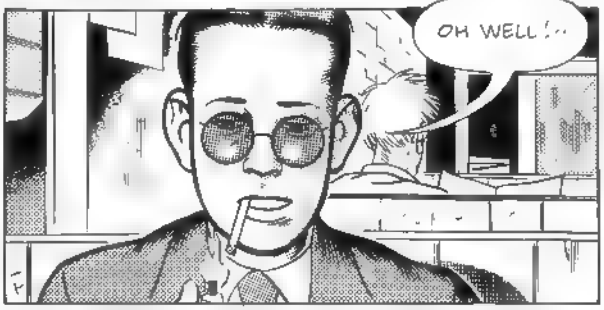
SABINE.
OKAY, WE NEED TO TALK

I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT, DOCTOR, BUT BELIEVE ME, I COULDN'T BE MORE SERIOUS!

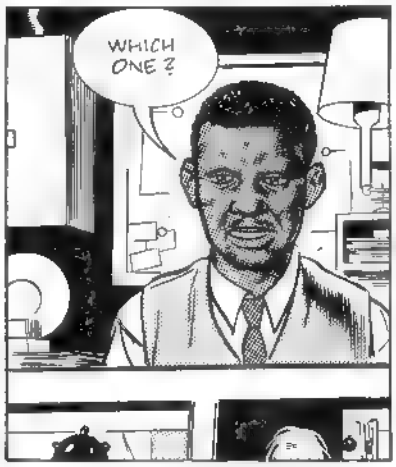

SO. WHAT'S THE WORD?
READY FOR MY CLOSE-UP
DR. LAO
KILL KILL KILL
LAURA L. GOD SUCKER
SCUMP



HE KNOWS THAT LIEBERMAN (WHO AFTER ALL IS A POMPOUS NO-TALENT WITH A TRUST FUND WHO HAS LEFT STRUGGLING WAITRESSES TIPLESS AND SHIRKED EVERY CIVIC DUTY) IS OUT, AS ALWAYS, TO IMPUGN HIS SUCCESS. BUT THIS SUCCESS IS NOT ONE MAN'S FRAGILE DELUSION; IT IS BUTTRESSED BY THE MIGHTY CONSENSUS OF REALITY...



EARLIER THAT DAY, WE FIND EPPS SHOPPING FOR ANTIQUES..



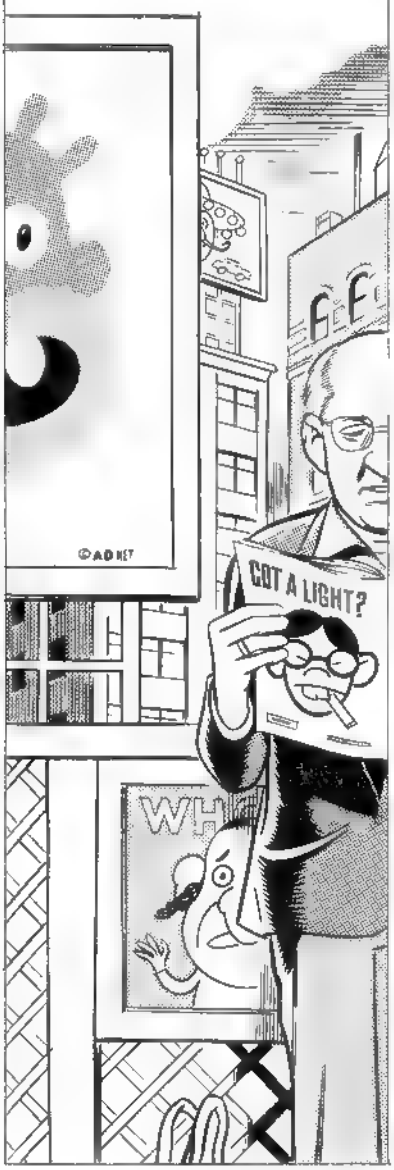
EPPS WALKS HOME THROUGH WHAT HAD ONCE BEEN BEFORE THE WAR, AN UPPER MIDDLE-CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD.

THERE IS A COARSE TEXTURE TO HIS THOUGHTS, BUT I'LL SPARE YOU THE SPECIFICS, SENSITIVE READER, IN DEFERENCE TO THE GOOD GRACES OF OUR PROTAGONIST...

UNDER HIS BREATH, EPPS REVEALS A POETIC TEMPERAMENT.

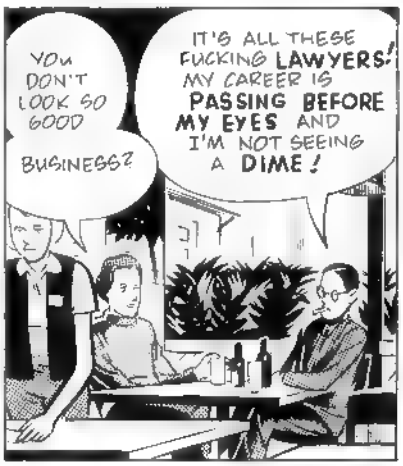
CHAPTER THREE

THE ADS SOON BEGIN TO APPEAR, FOLLOWED BY A TIDAL WAVE OF IMITATORS. THERE ARE FEW, IF ANY, OBJECTORS. AFTER ALL, WHO WANTS TO LOOK FOOLISH CRITICIZING WHAT IS CLEARLY AN IRONIC STATEMENT, INNOCENT OF BASE SENTIMENTS AND GLAMOURLESS MOTIVES..

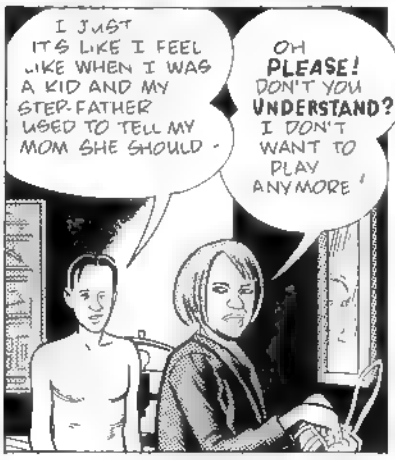


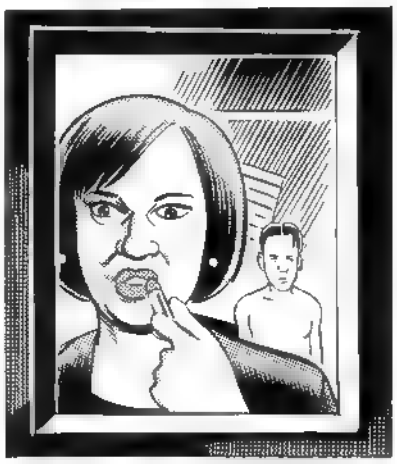
AROUND THIS TIME, FOUR PAGES IN **INSIDE PINK MAGAZINE** ARE DEVOTED TO "KAREN GHOSTLAW'S VAGINA: AN INTIMATE PORTRAIT."

FURTHERMORE, SABINE HAS LEFT EPPS FOR AN EFFEMINATE MAN, THE LOVE OF HER LIFE, WHO IS BEDRIDDEN WITH TERMINAL HEART PROBLEMS..



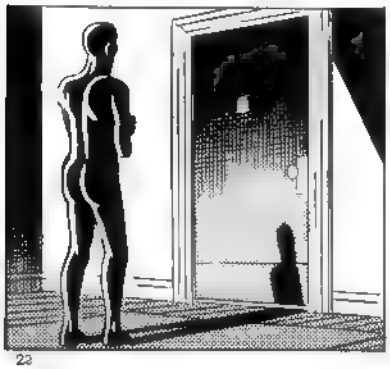
KAREN GHOSTLAW'S PEOPLE SUE DR TEN BOOM AND THERE IS AN OUT-OF-COURT SETTLEMENT..





"WHEN THINGS WERE GOING GOOD YOU HAD ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD FOR ME, YOU SELFISH BITCH," THINKS EPPS. 'WHAT KIND OF SELF RESPECTING WOMAN WOULD MARRY A **GYNECOLOGIST,** ANYWAY? A MAN WHO LOOKS AT OTHER WOMEN'S **PUSSIES** ALL DAY... A MAN WHO CAN TURN OFF **NATURAL HUMAN IMPULSES** LIKE A **LIGHT SWITCH** WHENEVER HE FEELS LIKE IT..

THIS IS IT, EPPS THINKS. I'VE HAD MY TINY MOMENT OF SUCCESS --A GIRL ON EACH ARM, MONEY IN MY POCKET.



EPPS IMAGINES HIMSELF THE SPURNED HEROINE OF A VICTORIAN NOVEL CRYING STAGEY MELODRAMATIC TEARS..

HEAVY MINUTES PASS BEFORE OUR FRIEND HEARS A MIRACULOUS SHUFFLE OUTSIDE THE DOOR..

KNOCK KNOCK

HIS SPIRIT LIFTS. "SHE **DOES** FEEL SORRY FOR ME AFTER ALL!"

IT'S ME.

DON'T WORRY, I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING TO HER! I DON'T THINK SHE EVEN SAW ME...

I REALLY WANT THINGS TO CONTINUE TO BLOSSOM BETWEEN YOU TWO!

I KNOW SHE'S NOT MY ENEMY I'M **MUCH BETTER** ABOUT THE WHOLE THING NOW. MAYBE YOU COULD EXPLAIN THAT TO HER...

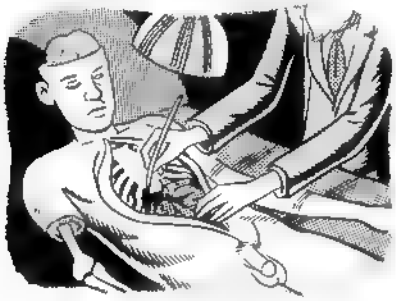
ACTUALLY, IT'S **YOU** I'M REALLY WORRIED ABOUT. I'VE BEEN THINKING A LOT ABOUT YOU, "EPPS"...

WHAT KIND OF MAN CUTS HIMSELF IN HALF? **EPPS?** WHERE'S THE **REST** OF YOU, EPPS?

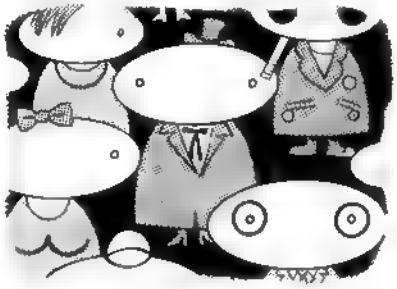
I THOUGHT I'D BE MORE **FREAKED OUT** BY A NAKED MAN.. NO OFFENSE, BUT IT ISN'T ALL THAT INTERESTING...

SPOSSSSHH

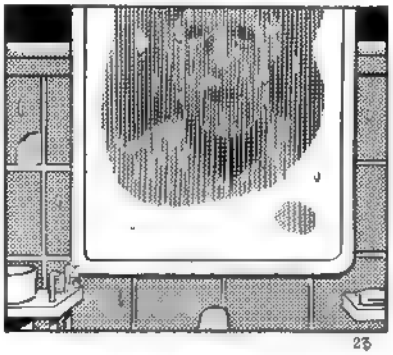
IN THIS LUCID MOMENT, EPPS CONCENTRATES AND SEES THE WORLD WITH HARSH, OBJECTIVE CLARITY: ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN ARE SIMPLE ANIMALS, OF NO MORE OR LESS INTEREST TO THE CLINICAL OBSERVER THAN A LEAF OR A CLAMSHELL.



HE HIMSELF, OF COURSE, IS THE EXCEPTION. HIS PERSONAL HISTORY CASCADES BEFORE HIM AS A PATTERNLESS COMPLEX OF CONFLICTING PHASES AND TANGENTIAL NOTIONS, DEFINING A HUMAN MATRIX SO UNFATHOMABLY OBSCURE AS TO YIELD AN INFINITE NUMBER OF CORRECT INTERPRETATIONS...



EPPS FEELS A DULL ACHE BEHIND HIS TONSILS. HE OPENS HIS MOUTH AND LOOKS TO THE MIRROR BUT SEES ONLY THE HANDSOME BLUR OF A TRAGIC, MISUNDERSTOOD GENIUS.



AFTER A CONCERT IN MIAMI, KAREN GHOSTLAW IS KILLED BY A BACKSTAGE MAIL BOMB. (ALAS, I HAVE NO CONTROL OVER SUCH THINGS (ONLY THE WEATHER, EARTHQUAKES, WHIRLPOOLS, VOLCANOS, ETC.))

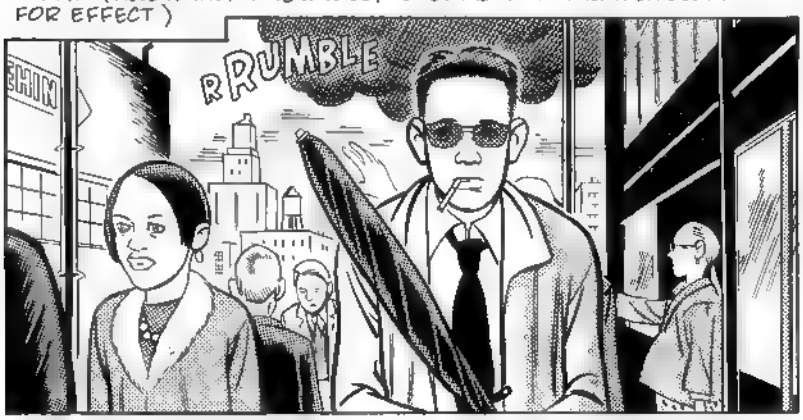
DR TEN BOOM QUITS GYNECOLOGY AND MRS. TEN BOOM IS, FROM THAT POINT ON, A FAITHFUL WIFE...

CLAUDETTE IS SENT TO DEATH ROW WHERE SHE BEGINS A ROMANTIC CORRESPONDENCE WITH A HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER...

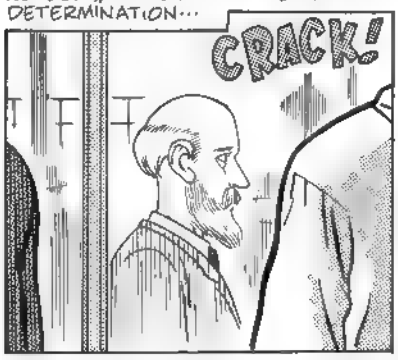
BUNNY AND LIEBERMAN HAVE A CHILD...

FOR SEVERAL WEEKS DR. TEN BOOM HOVERS ON THE LOW END OF THE CHARTS WITH HIS RENDITION OF AN OLD ROY ORBISON SONG...

AND OUR EPPS? WE RETURN HIM TO THE STREET WHERE WE FOUND HIM (ALLOW ME, IF YOU WILL, TO BRING IN A THUNDER CLOUD FOR EFFECT)



SENSING PERHAPS HIS IMPENDING ESCAPE FROM THE BONDS OF OUR SCRUTINY (THE UNHOLY SURVEILLANCE OF INCONTROVERTIBLE GOD AND IMAGINARY READER), HE MOVES WITH BRISK DETERMINATION...



AS HE DISAPPEARS, WE ARE LEFT WITH THRILLING FRAGMENTS OF A NEW EPPS. THIS TIME AN EMBITTERED, INTENTIONALLY UNFASHIONABLE, WORLD-WEARY MISANTHROPE (RECYCLING SUCCESSFUL MOTIFS FROM THE PAST (JAZZ, ALCOHOLISM)). THIS WILL LEAD OF COURSE TO CRIPPLING LONELINESS WHICH IN TURN WILL LEAD TO A BRIEF MARRIAGE TO A MANIC DEPRESSIVE SCULPTRESS WHO WILL FURTHER SEND OUR BOY CAREENING LIKE A PINBALL TOWARD YET ANOTHER FUTURE OF SEEMINGLY UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES...

I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON IN THIS ONE ...
YEAH, WHAT THE FUCK?

GOD, YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THIS ALBUM!
I KNOW. I CAN'T BELIEVE I FINALLY FOUND IT AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!

GHOST WORLD
LOOK AT THIS! I TOOK THIS WHEN I WAS LIKE EIGHT!
GOD, HOW LONG HAS THAT GRAFITTI BEEN THERE?
I KNOW!
IT'S SO WEIRD THAT YOU TOOK A PICTURE OF YOUR GARAGE!

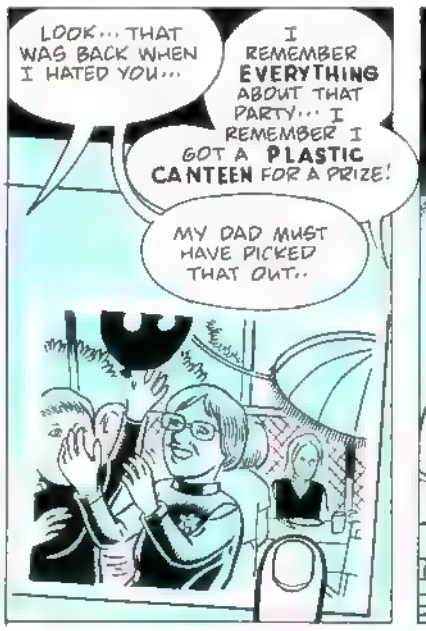
I CAN'T EVEN LOOK AT THESE PICTURES FROM SIXTH GRADE!
EW, WAIT! IS THAT MELORRA?

YUP AND NAOMI... THE JUNIOR JAPS OF AMERICA!
SHE WAS ALWAYS SUPER UGLY!

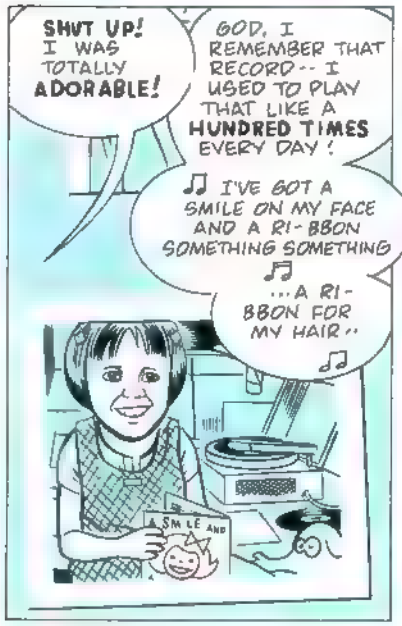
LOOK, IT'S JOANIE.. LOOK HOW BEAUTIFUL SHE WAS..
WAIT. WHICH ONE WAS SHE?
THE SECOND WIFE.. THE NICE ONE... GOD, LOOK AT HER...

EW, AND THERE'S THE BITCH...
I REMEMBER HER.. WAS SHE THE THIRD OR FOURTH WIFE?
THERE WAS NO FOURTH WIFE!

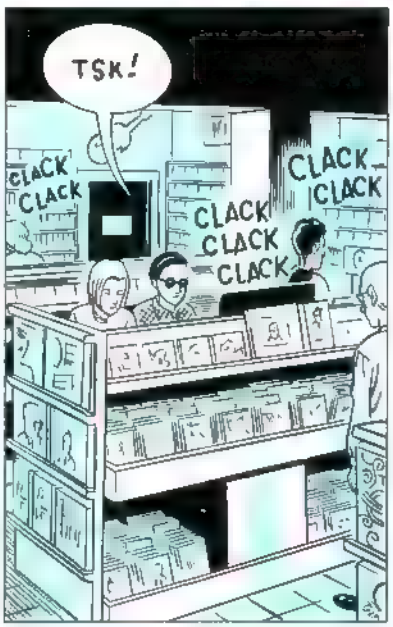
GOD. LOOK AT HER... WHAT A FUCKING MONSTER!
NICE HOOTERS, THOUGH.

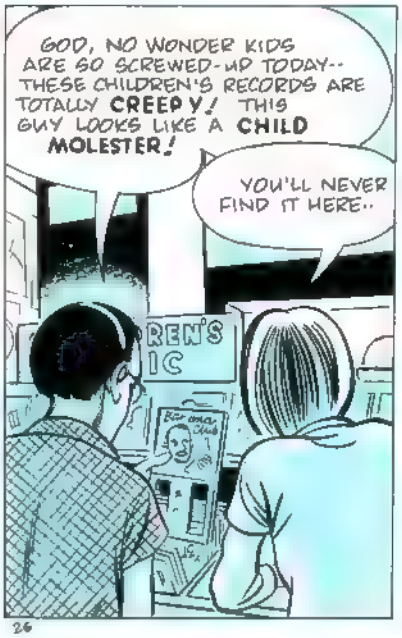

LOOK... THAT WAS BACK WHEN I HATED YOU...
I REMEMBER EVERYTHING ABOUT THAT PARTY... I REMEMBER I GOT A PLASTIC CANTEEN FOR A PRIZE!
MY DAD MUST HAVE PICKED THAT OUT..

OH CUTE! LOOK AT ME!
WHAT A LITTLE HOSEBAG!

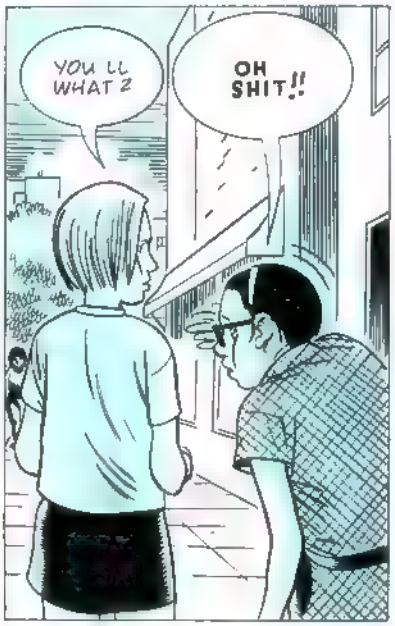

SHUT UP! I WAS TOTALLY ADORABLE!
GOD, I REMEMBER THAT RECORD-- I USED TO PLAY THAT LIKE A HUNDRED TIMES EVERY DAY!
♫ I'VE GOT A SMILE ON MY FACE AND A RI-BBON SOMETHING SOMETHING ♫
...A RI-BBON FOR MY HAIR.. ♫

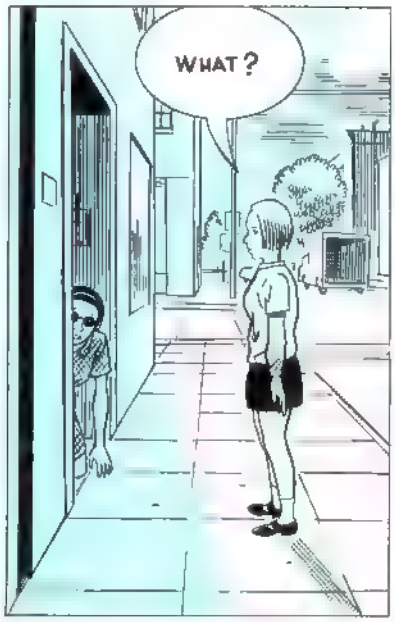
..I CAN'T REMEMBER, BUT IT WAS TOTALLY AMAZING!
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ALL MY OLD RECORDS?

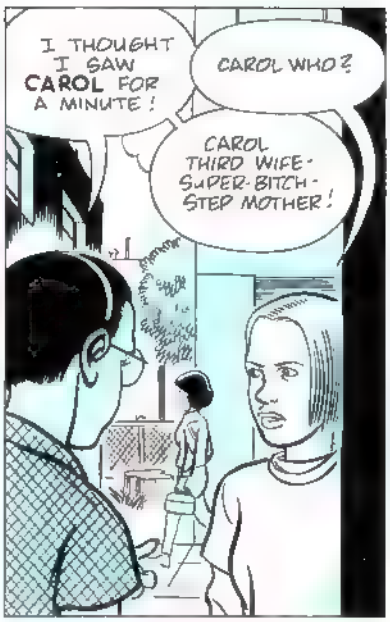

TSK!
CLACK CLACK
CLACK CLACK CLACK
CLACK CLACK

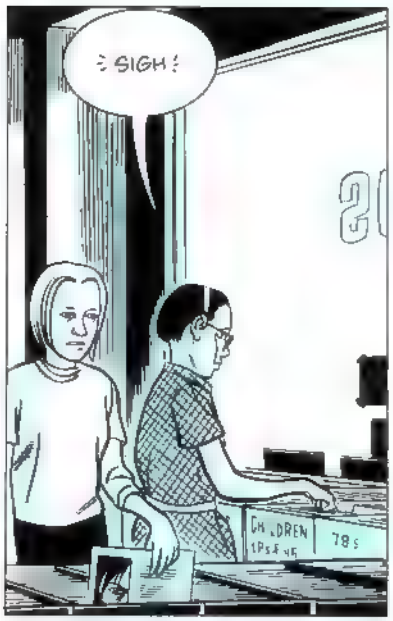

GOD, NO WONDER KIDS ARE SO SCREWED-UP TODAY-- THESE CHILDREN'S RECORDS ARE TOTALLY CREEPY! THIS GUY LOOKS LIKE A CHILD MOLESTER!
YOU'LL NEVER FIND IT HERE..

IF I DON'T FIND THAT RECORD I'LL BE LACHRYMOSE!


YOU'LL WHAT?
OH SHIT!!

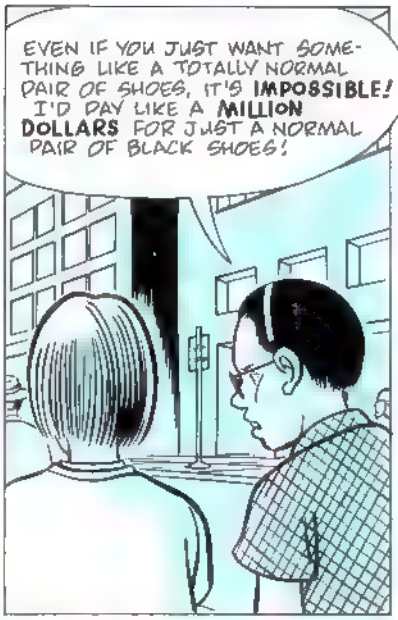

WHAT?


I THOUGHT I SAW CAROL FOR A MINUTE!
CAROL WHO?
CAROL THIRD WIFE-SUPER-BITCH-STEP MOTHER!

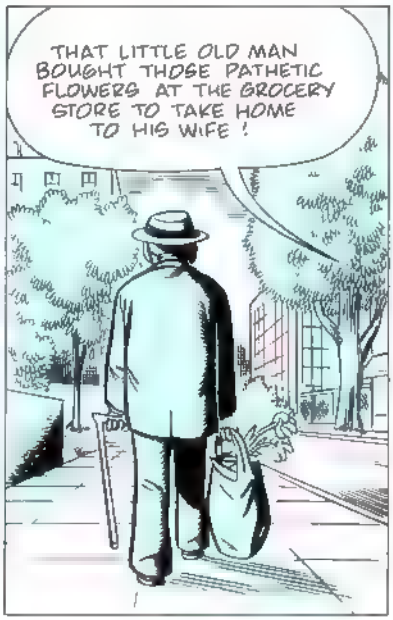

SIGH!

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THIS KIDS RECORD CALLED SOMETHING LIKE "A SMILE AND A RIBBON"? IT'S GOT A CARTOON OF A LITTLE GIRL ON THE COVER...
DID YOU CHECK THE CHILDRENS SECTION?

GOD, IT DRIVES ME CRAZY WHEN I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I WANT AND I CAN'T FIND IT ANYWHERE! IT'S LIKE DOES ANYBODY WANT MY MONEY!? I MEAN WHAT THE FUCK!?
FRIENDLY FOODS


EVEN IF YOU JUST WANT SOMETHING LIKE A TOTALLY NORMAL PAIR OF SHOES, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I'D PAY LIKE A MILLION DOLLARS FOR JUST A NORMAL PAIR OF BLACK SHOES!

OH MY GOD, LOOK!
WHAT?

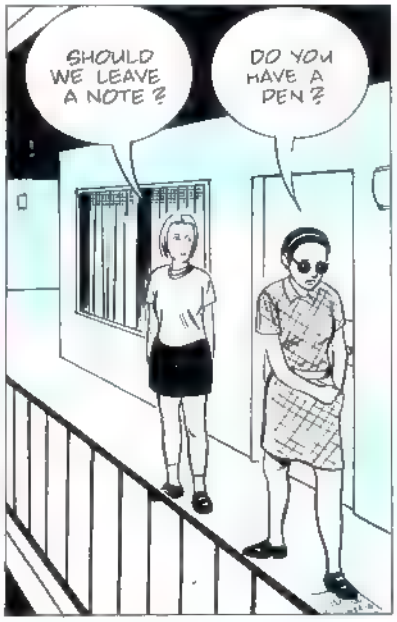

THAT LITTLE OLD MAN BOUGHT THOSE PATHETIC FLOWERS AT THE GROCERY STORE TO TAKE HOME TO HIS WIFE!

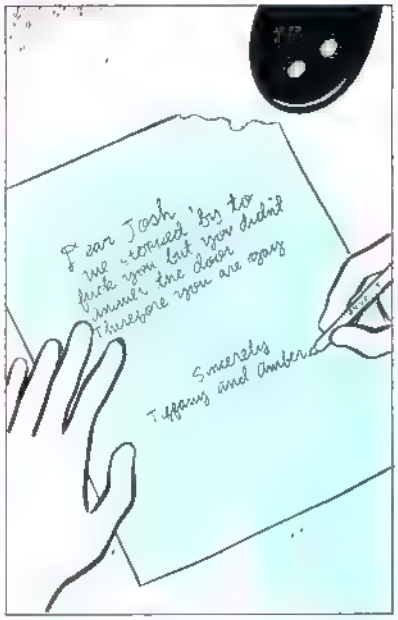
OH GOD, IT'S SO CUTE, I'M DYING!
DOESN'T JOSH LIVE AROUND HERE?

HEY YEAH! HE'LL KNOW WHERE I CAN GET OLD CHILDRENS RECORDS!

BAM BAM BAM BAM

I BET HE'S REALLY IN THERE AND HE'S JUST TOO COOL TO ANSWER THE DOOR..
JOSH!


SHOULD WE LEAVE A NOTE?
DO YOU HAVE A PEN?


Dear Josh,
We "conned" 'by to fuck you but you didn't answer the door therefore you are sorry
Sincerely
Tiffany and Amber

YOU'RE NOT REALLY GOING TO LEAVE THAT, ARE YOU?
WATCH ME.

I REALLY DO THINK IT'S HIGH TIME ONE OF US FUCKED JOSH..
GOD, YOU'RE OBSESSED WITH THAT... THAT'S ALL YOU EVER TALK ABOUT!
YOU'RE OBSESSED I JUST THINK IT'S A FUNNY IDEA!
OPEN

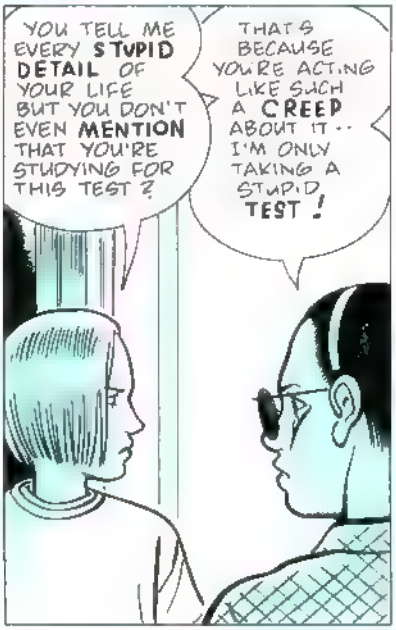
HAS HE EVER EVEN HAD A GIRLFRIEND? MAYBE HE IS GAY..
YEAH, I DUNNO. I GUESS IT'S POSSIBLE.. IT'S MORE LIKE HE'S ASEXUAL...

IT'S SO HARD TO TELL WITH HIM. HE'S SUCH A TACITURN FELLOW

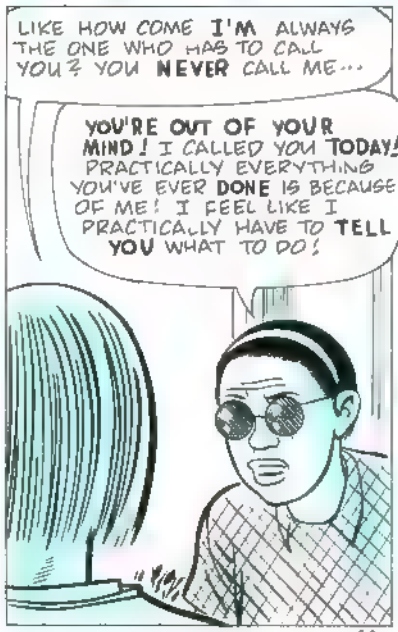
WHERE DID YOU GET ALL THESE WORDS?
OH, IT'S JUST BECAUSE OF STUDYING FOR THAT STUPID TEST MY DAD WANTS ME TO TAKE...

I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO TAKE THAT TEST.
YEAH, WELL.. MY DAD ALREADY PAID FOR IT, AND HE'S REALLY BEEN PESTERING ME AND EVERYTHING.. IT'S A TOTAL DRAG..

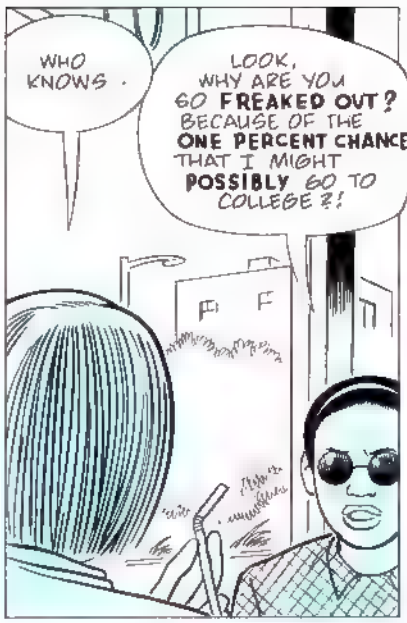
YOU ARE SUCH A FUCKING LIAR
I'M NOT LYING, I JUST


YOU TELL ME EVERY STUPID DETAIL OF YOUR LIFE BUT YOU DON'T EVEN MENTION THAT YOU'RE STUDYING FOR THIS TEST?
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE ACTING LIKE SUCH A CREEP ABOUT IT.. I'M ONLY TAKING A STUPID TEST!

MAYBE I'M JUST SICK OF PUTTING MORE INTO THIS FRIENDSHIP THAN I GET OUT OF IT...
WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?
OPEN


LIKE HOW COME I'M ALWAYS THE ONE WHO HAS TO CALL YOU? YOU NEVER CALL ME...
YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND! I CALLED YOU TODAY! PRACTICALLY EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER DONE IS BECAUSE OF ME! I FEEL LIKE I PRACTICALLY HAVE TO TELL YOU WHAT TO DO!

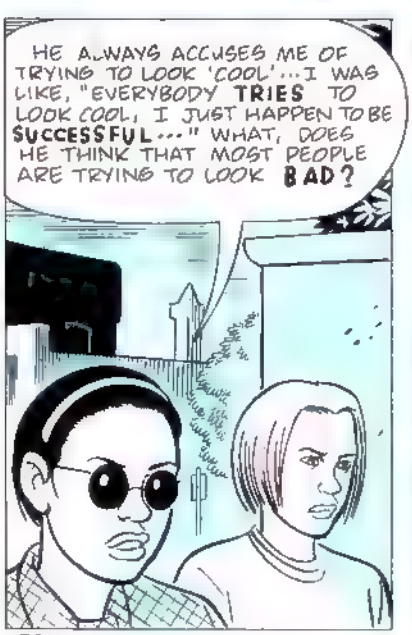
OH, BECAUSE YOU'RE SO MUCH MORE INTERESTING AND SO MUCH SMARTER THAN ME...
WELL IF I'M SUCH A JERK WHY DO YOU HANG OUT WITH ME?


WHO KNOWS.
LOOK, WHY ARE YOU SO FREAKED OUT? BECAUSE OF THE ONE PERCENT CHANCE THAT I MIGHT POSSIBLY GO TO COLLEGE?!

NO. BECAUSE YOU'RE ACTING SO WEIRD ABOUT IT! WHAT IS IT, SOME BIG SECRET?! IT'S LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO SNEAK AWAY OR SOMETHING...
THAT'S JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE ACTING SO WEIRD!

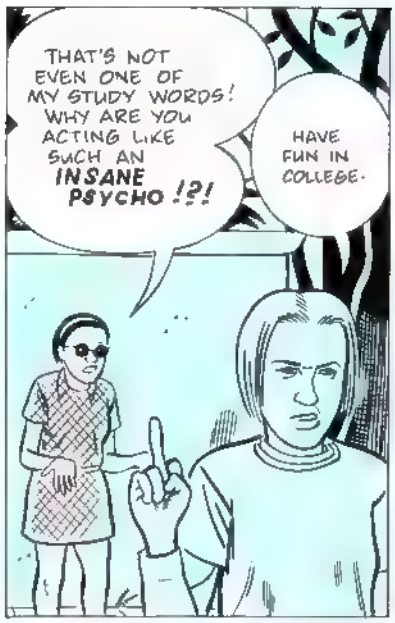
OPEN
LOOK, JUST FORGET IT!

GOD, I GOT INTO THIS BIG ARGUMENT WITH JOHN ELLIS YESTERDAY..
MM.

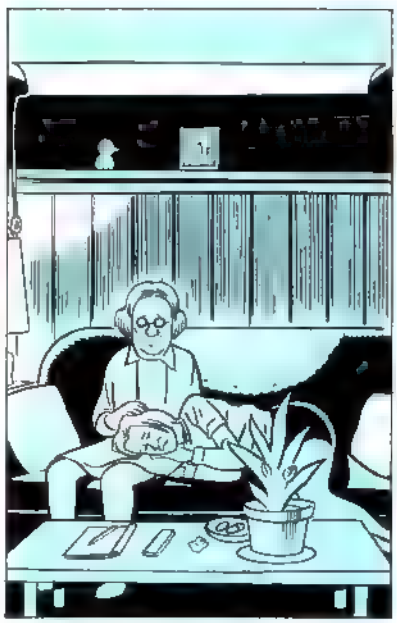

HE ALWAYS ACCUSES ME OF TRYING TO LOOK 'COOL'... I WAS LIKE, "EVERYBODY TRIES TO LOOK COOL, I JUST HAPPEN TO BE SUCCESSFUL..." WHAT, DOES HE THINK THAT MOST PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO LOOK BAD?

IT'S NO WONDER HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS... EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM IS TOTALLY CONTENTIOUS...
GOD, FUCK YOU!

WHAT?! WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU!?
YOU ARE!
"OH, HE'S SO CONTENTIOUS"
JESUS!


THAT'S NOT EVEN ONE OF MY STUDY WORDS! WHY ARE YOU ACTING LIKE SUCH AN INSANE PSYCHO !?!
HAVE FUN IN COLLEGE.

:SOB:



:SOB:
GOD, FUCK YOU BITCH!

KIDDO? WHAT'S WRONG?
:SNIFF:

DO YOU KNOW WHERE ALL MY OLD RECORDS ARE?

DUMPLING, IF THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG I WISH YOU'D TELL ME...
IT'S NOTHING... IT'S JUST SOME HORMONAL THING..

I HAVE TO GO OUT FOR AWHILE AND GET SOME TAMPONS.

:SOB:

KNOCK KNOCK

HI. WHAT'S UP?
CAN I COME IN?

ARE YOU THE ONE WHO LEFT THIS NOTE?
I GUESS...

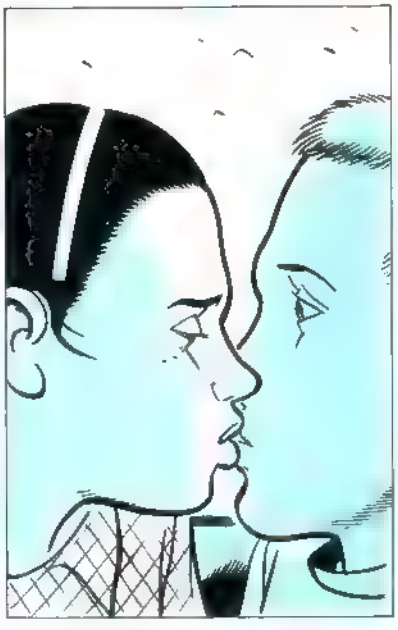
SO WHAT'S UP?
NOTHING. SIT OVER HERE..

DO YOU WANT SOMETHING TO DRINK?
WHY? ARE YOU TRYING TO GET ME WASTED SO YOU CAN DATE RAPE ME?
YEAH, RIGHT

"YEAH RIGHT.." WELL WHY NOT? WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? WHY DO YOU EVEN TALK TO ME IF YOU HATE ME SO MUCH?
WHY WOULD I HATE YOU?
WHO KNOWS? YOU'VE NEVER ONCE SAID ANYTHING NICE TO ME!

I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE YOU'RE GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY TO MAKE ME FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE SO YOU CAN MAKE FUN OF ME...
THAT'S JUST THE WAY I AM...I'M TRYING TO GET YOUR ATTENTION!

GOD. I PRACTICALLY LOVE YOU, JOSH!



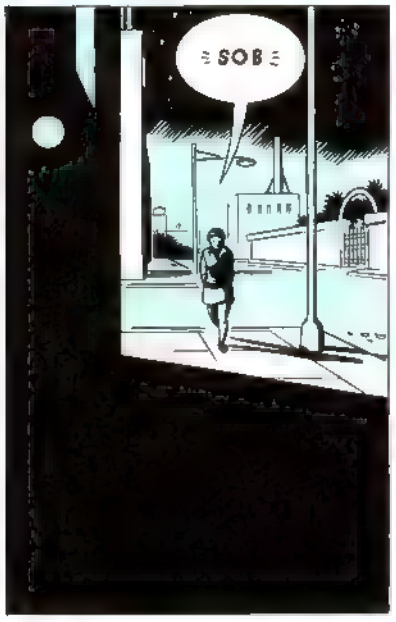
YOU MUST KNOW HOW MUCH I ... I MEAN IT MUST BE TOTALLY OBVIOUS..
DO YOU HAVE ANY PROTECTION?

I ·I THINK SO..
SHOULD I CHECK?

OH GOD..
WHAT?

WHAT?

NOTHING, I JUST TOTALLY HATE MYSELF..
GOD. FUCK EVERYBODY!

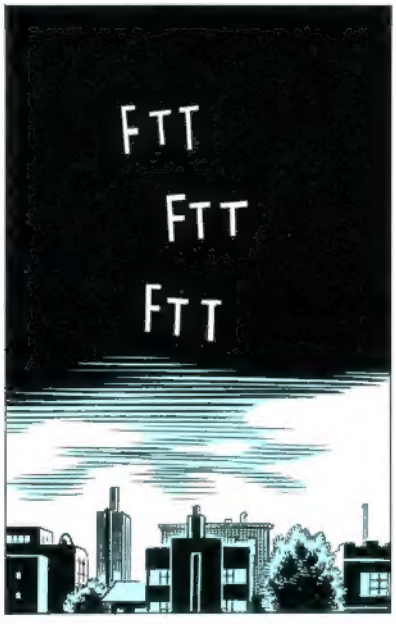

SOB

OH MY GOD!
A SMILE AND A RIBBON

...BECAUSE I'LL WEAR A SMILE AND A RIBBON IN MY HAIR.
FFT
FFT
FTT

CRRKK ♫ A SMILE IS SOMETHING SPECIAL, A RIBBON IS SOMETHING RARE... ♫

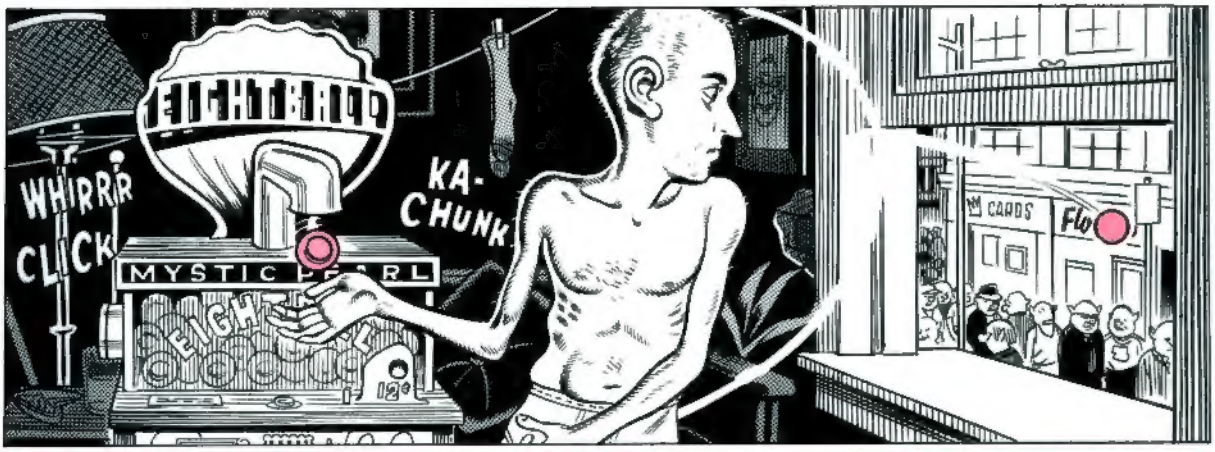
♫ SO I'LL BE SPECIAL AND I'LL BE RARE, WITH A SMILE AND A RIBBON IN MY HAIR... ♫


FTT
FTT
FTT

FTT
FTT
FTT

...A RIBBON IS SOMETHING RARE... ♫

YOU WON'T BELIEVE WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT...
♫ ...WITH A SMILE AND A RIBBON IN MY HAIR... ♫
Clowes



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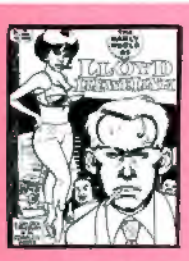

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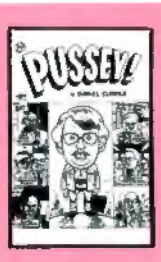

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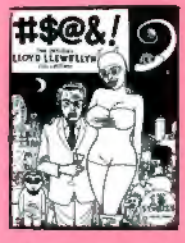

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